

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
**FROM:** Karen Thomas, Case Manager  
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review  
**DATE:** November 17, 2015  
**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 19116, 4301 13<sup>th</sup> Street (DGS –Roosevelt High School)

### **I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following:

- § 400.7 Roof Structure Setback (10 feet required, 8 feet proposed); and
- § 2116.5 Location of Parking Spaces (Parking spaces in front on an open area of the lot; proposed).

Subject to the landscaping recommendations of the District Department of Urban Forestry, as shown on the applicant's landscaping plans.

### **II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	4301 13th Street NW
Legal Description	Square 2915 Lot 0802
Ward	4/ANC4C05
Lot Characteristics	The 722,848 sf, irregular-shaped lot is a developed District public school (DCPS) campus consisting of a senior high school, a middle school and an athletic field and track. It is bordered on all boundaries by public right-of-ways, including Alison Street to the north, Iowa Avenue and Kansas Avenue to the east and northeast, Upshur Street to the south and 13th Street to the west.
Zoning	R-4: Public schools are a permitted use in this zone
Existing Development	The property is developed with a school with a high school building a middle school building and a library.
Adjacent Properties	There are no abutting properties since the square is fully developed with the DCPS campus. The lot is bounded to the north by Allison Street, Upshur Street to the south, 13 <sup>th</sup> Street on the west and Kansas Avenue NW at the southeast corner.

Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The neighborhood has a variety of residential structures within the R-4 and R-5 structures and zone districts, as well as C-M-1 zoned property to the south along Upshur Street and a mix of C-2-A and residential R-4 zoning along the eastern side of the property along Iowa Avenue.
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### III. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

The applicant, the Department of General Services (GSA), is in the process of renovation of the existing high school, including modernization of the building's heating and cooling systems with installation of new equipment, which could not be placed in the location of existing equipment. Further, some of the on-site parking spaces would be relocated to the front of the school, with access from 13<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W. The applicant informed OP that access via curb cuts to the proposed parking area was granted by the Public Space Committee.

### IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

R-4 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height § 400	60 ft. max.	63.5 ft.	63.5 ft.	Existing non-conformity
Lot Width § 401	120 ft. min.	1,072.8 ft.	1,072.8 ft.	None required
Lot Area § 401	9,000 sf min.	722,848 sf	722,848 sf	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 402	1.8	0.46	0.47	None required
Lot Occupancy § 403	60 % max.	17 %	17 %	None required
Rear Yard § 404	20 ft. min.	226.4 ft.	226.4 ft.	None required
Side Yard § 405	8 ft. min.	55.4ft.; 260.9ft.	55.4ft.; 260.9ft.	None required
Parking § 2101	132 spaces min.	167 spaces	169 spaces	None required

### V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

#### a. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 400.7; 411.11 – Roof Structure Setback

- i. Section 400.7 requires housing for mechanical equipment... provided on the roof of a building or structure, ...to meet the requirements of § 411 and ...be set back from all exterior walls a distance at least equal to its height above the roof upon which it is located; and not to ....extend above the permitted eighteen foot, six inch (18 ft., 6 in.), height of the housing.

§411.11 provides that where it is impracticable....or where it would make full compliance restrictive or unreasonable, ... the Board shall be empowered to approve as a special exception relief under Section 3104 the location, ...number of structures regulated under Sections 411.3 provided the intent and purpose of the Regulations shall not be impaired by the structure and the light and air to adjacent buildings would not be adversely affected.

Structural analysis of the roof determined that certain areas of the roof structure, by shape and lack of structural integrity would not be able to accommodate the mechanical equipment for the cooling and ventilation system proposed for the school's modernization project. The applicant states that where structural integrity is lacking, the cost of improvement to support mechanical equipment would be prohibitive for the public school. Therefore, the systems would be placed on smaller areas of the roof, where it would not exceed the load bearing requirements, but where the enclosures would not provide the one-to-one setback from the roof's edges. Therefore, as indicated by the submission, the top of the screen wall would be 10 feet above the finished roof and the distance for the roof's edge would be 8 feet.

**ii. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?**

The proposal would be in harmony with the intent of the Regulations, as a setback of eight feet would be provided, and the difference between the required setback and the proposed setback (2 feet) on such a large lot would be imperceptible from public space.

**ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?**

The school campus occupies the entire square and as such there are no abutting properties to be adversely impacted.

**b. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 2116.4, 2116.**

Parking spaces, shall be located either within a permitted garage or car port...or on an open area of the lot except as provided in § 2116.4, which does not permit surface parking to be located "*between a lot line abutting a street and the more restrictive of either a building façade or a line extending from and parallel to a building façade*". However, §2116.5 states that open parking spaces accessory to a building may be located anywhere on the lot (including in front of the building) by special exception, if in accordance with §§ 2116.6 through 2116.9.

*2116.6 The Board shall determine that it is not practical to locate the spaces in accordance with § 2116.2 for the following reasons:*

*(a) Unusual topography, grades, shape, size, or dimensions of the lot;*

The property has grade challenges and is developed with other structures and school related programming at grade where parking might otherwise be possible. In addition, since the site occupies the entire square, parking anywhere on the property would be between the building and a street.

*(b) The lack of an alley or the lack of appropriate ingress or egress through existing or proposed alleys or streets;*

There is no alley access as the campus occupies the entire square, so access to parking must be from one of the three streets surrounding this property.

(c) *Traffic hazards caused by unusual street grades; or*

This is not applicable, in this instance.

(d) *The location of required parking spaces elsewhere on the same lot or on another lot would result in more efficient use of land, better design or landscaping, safer ingress or egress, and less adverse impact on neighboring properties.*

The proposed location is the most efficient location, given the existing structures and resulting lack of available land area upon which to locate the parking spaces, necessary for the school's access and use. The location generally minimizes the amount of pavement, as driveways are minimized.

*2116.7 When the accessory parking spaces are to be located elsewhere than on the lot upon which the building or structure they are intended to serve is located, the parking on adjacent lots or lots separated only by an alley from the lot upon which the building or structure is located, shall be preferred.*

This is not applicable, in this instance.

*2116.8 The accessory parking spaces shall be located so as to furnish reasonable and convenient parking facilities for the occupants or guests of the building or structures that they are designed to serve.*

The parking area proposed at this location is intended to accommodate access to the school's entrance where security is located, and to accommodate drop/off and pick up for students, as well as ADA accessibility.

*2116.9 The Board may impose conditions on any accessory or non-accessory parking spaces as to screening, coping, setbacks, fences, the location of entrances and exits, or any other requirement it deems necessary to protect adjacent or nearby property. It may also impose other conditions it deems necessary to assure the continued provision and maintenance of the spaces.*

The applicant consulted extensively with DDOT's Public Space and Urban Forestry and provided an improved landscaping plan reviewed by the agencies, which involve transplanting of the existing memorial tree on the site as well as hollies, and magnolias per arborist recommendations.

**i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?**

The proposal demonstrated satisfaction of the criteria of Section 2116.6.

**ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?**

The use of neighboring property should not be adversely impacted by the proposal, as the school occupies the entire square.

## **VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

The District Department of Transportation's comments would be submitted separately to the record.

## **VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

ANC comments have not been received to the record to date.

Attachment: Location Map

Landscaping Plans, (as reviewed by Urban Forestry)



**Zoning Map and Site Condition**



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